DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 319 572 RC 017 559

TITLE	Education of Homeless Children and Youth under the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act. Annual Report. Department of Education Form 1810-0536.
INSTITUTION	Colorado State Dept. of Education, Denver.
PUB DATE	19 Dec 89
NOTE	35p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Access to Education; *Children; Disadvantaged Youth; *Educational Needs; Elementary Secondary Education; Federal Programs; *Homeless People; *Special Needs Students; State Government; *State Programs; Telephone Surveys; *Youth
IDENTIFIERS	*Colorado; Status Reports

ABSTRACT

In response to the U.S. Department of Education requirement for a state status report on homeless children and youth, the Colorado Department of Education conducted a 1-day telephone survey of homeless service providers and school districts, to determine the numbers and educational needs of the state's homeless children and youth. The survey figures are intended to represent the numbers of homeless children and youth in Colorado on any given day of the year. The survey data are defined in several appendices. Appendix A contains a detailed explanation of the total number (1245) of homeless children and youth in Colorado on a given day. Appendix B is a detailed explanation of the estimated yearly total of homeless youth ages 14 through 21. Appendices C, D, E, and F respond to the federal status report form's questions regarding state housing for homeless children, reasons why homeless children do not attend school, and the special educational needs of Colorado's homeless children and youth. Appendix G is an explanation of the school district survey. Appendix H is a report on homeless youth not residing in traditional homeless shelters. Appendix I contains a copy of the Annual Survey on Education of Homeless Children and Youth, followed by copies of hospital and school district surveys developed by the Colorado Department of Education. Appendix J is a copy of the Denver Public Schools' proposed Pilot Project on educating homeless children and youth. Appendix K is a copy of the School District On-Site Review Form. (TES)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ED319572

ANNUAL REPORT
Education of Homeless Children and Youth
Under the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act
Department of Education
Form 1810-0536

Submitted by:
The Colorado Department of Education
December 19, 1989

RC017559

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☑ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Betty Hinkle

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

pages

Annual Report Introduction and Overview. 1-3

Federal Status Report Form- Education of Homeless Children and Youth Uner the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act. 4-5

Appendix A - Explanation of response to Status Report Question 1 6

Appendix B - Explanation of yearly total provided in response to Status Report Question 1 7

Appendix C - Explanation of figures provided in response to Status Report Question II. 8

Appendix D - Response to Status Report Question V. 9-10

Appendix E - Response to Status Report Question VI.(a) 11-12

Appendix F - Response to Status Report Question VI.(b) 13

Appendix G - Explanation of Colorado School District Survey 14

Appendix H - Report on Homeless Children and Youth Not Found in Shelters. 15-21

Appendix I - Copies of Survey instruments used 22-24

Appendix J - Denver Publix Schools Proposed Pilot Project of Educating Homeless Children 25-28

Appendix K - School District on-Site Review Form 29

ANNUAL REPORT ON EDUCATION OF HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Introduction

Since the submittal of the December, 1988 final report on the education of homeless children and youth, the Colorado Department of Education has adopted surveying methods which have resulted in more accurate and empirically sound data on homeless children and youth in the state. The Colorado Department of Education has comprehensively surveyed the state's homeless children and youth population through its Annual Survey on education of the homeless developed in response to the United States Department of Education's Status Report form. The annual survey was a one-day count throughout the state of Colorado, and thus the figures reflected on the Status Report form represent the numbers of homeless children and youth which may be found in the state of Colorado on any given day of the year.

Choosing The Surveying Mechanism

Following a series of discussions with Colorado's homeless service providers regarding which of the many surveying techniques to apply in determining the numbers and educational needs of Colorado's homeless children and youth, the Colorado Department of Education chose to use a one-day count method for obtaining data on the homeless. This particular method was chosen for two important reasons. Of primary importance is the substantial reduction in chances of duplication in the count of the homeless population which is brought about by a one day count. Due to the high mobility of the homeless population and the fact that homeless service providers are reluctant to, or prohibited from, disclosing the names of homeless children included in the survey, other potential mechanisms for reducing duplication are either non existent or impractical. The one day count method was also chosen because of positive feedback from the homeless service providers contacted during the pilot stage of the annual survey who indicated that a one day count would certainly be a less burdensome and less time consuming surveying method. The Colorado Department of Education concluded as a result of this feedback that a less burdensome survey would encourage greater participation among homeless service providers and therefore would result in more representative data on the homeless population across the state.

Conducting the One Day Count

The Colorado Department of Education contacted every homeless service provider in the state of Colorado directly by means of a series of telephone calls placed to all such entities. This method of contacting the homeless service providers was chosen for several reasons: First, direct contact with the service providers would increase the rate of response to the survey. Second, direct contact with the service providers would allow the Department of Education to answer any questions regarding who should be considered homeless, thereby ensuring more accurate results. Telephone calls to the participating shelters on the actual survey day served both as a reminder to the shelters and further assurance to the Department of Education that the survey was indeed being conducted on the appropriate, designated day.

Following the guidelines provided by the U.S. Department of Education, the Colorado Department of Education conducted a second one day count of homeless children and youth in order to validate the results of the first one day count. Unfortunately, the response rate of the second survey was quite low, making it virtually impossible to integrate the results of the two surveys. The Department has evaluated the reasons for the low response rate of the second survey, and will use the results of this evaluation to avoid similar results in next year's surveying.

Entities Surveyed

Included within the scope of the Colorado Department of Education's surveying were all homeless service providers in the state: public and private shelters, day and night shelters, battered women's shelters, runaway shelters, departments of social services, and police and sheriff's departments throughout the state. In addition to surveying these homeless service providers, the Department also developed and distributed a survey for hospitals and other medical service providers in the state. Finally, surveying of Colorado's schools is being executed on an on going basis through the Department of Education's Field Services on-site review program which is conducted in three year cycles. The interim results of the school district are available at present, and can be found in Appendix G. However, conclusive results representative of the entire state of Colorado will not be available until 1991.

During the month of October of this year the Department of Education ventured on a seemingly impossible task with respect to surveying the homeless- and that was attempting to count the number of homeless youth who are not found in the shelters but rather are living independently "on the streets". The Department was interested in specifically targeting the age group of fourteen through twenty-one, an age group often overlooked and underestimated in homeless surveying projects. The results of this innovative surveying can be found in Appendix H.

Contents

The Annual Report for 1989 includes the completed U.S. Department of Education's Status Report form, as well as several appendices. Appendix A contains a detailed explanation of the total number of homeless children and youth found in Colorado in a given day. Appendix B is a detailed explanation of the estimated yearly total of homeless youth ages fourteen through twenty-one. Appendices C, D, E, and F contain the responses to Status Report form questions II, V, VI(a) and VI(b), respectively. Appendix G is an explanation of the school district survey. Appendix H is the Report on homeless youth not residing in traditional homeless shelters. Appendix I contains a copy of the Annual Survey on Education of homeless children and youth, followed by copies of the hospital and school district surveys developed by the Department of Education. Appendix J is a copy of the Denver Public Schools' proposed Pilot Project on educating homeless children and youth. Finally, Appendix K is copy of the School District On-Site Review Form.

STATUS REPORT - EDUCATION OF HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH UNDER THE STEWART B. MCKINNEY HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Form Approved
OMB No.: 1810-0536
Expiration Date: 8/90

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

SPECIFICS. Please provide the following information requested pursuant to Section 722(d) of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act and return to:

Office of Elementary and Secondary Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW (Room . - MS)
Washington, D.C. 20202

DEFINITIONS: For purposes of this reporting form, the following definitions apply:

"Homeless"- A homeless individual is one who (1) lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate residence or (2) has a primary nighttime residence in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter for temporary accommodations (including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill), an institution providing temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized, or a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accomodation for human beings (Section 103 (a)(1)(2) of the Act).

The term "homeless" or "homeless individual" does not include any individual imprisoned or otherwise detained by an Act of Congress or a State law (Section 103(c)).

"Child" and "Youth"- Persons who, if they were children of residents of the State, would be entitled to a free public education.

I. (a) List numbers of homeless children and youth in your State according to school-level groups.

School Level	Numbers of Children/Youth
Preschool	442
Elementary (K-6)	463
Middle/Jr. High (7-9)	124
High School (10-12)	216
I. Total	1,245* (see appendix A)
II. Yearly projection	1,103* (see appendix B)

(b) Indicate the source of the information in item I.(a).

I. Annual Survey on Homeless Children and Youth (see appendix A)

II. Report on Homeless Children and Youth (see appendix B also)

II. (a) List (in rank and order) numbers of children housed according to the locations of homeless children and youth in your State. (NOTE: The total number of children should equal the total number in item I.(a)).

Type of Housing	Numbers of Children/Youth
Public operated shelters	217
Privately operated shelters	972
Relatives or friends	38 (see appendix C)
Other (specify) medical facilities/welfare hotels	7 / 11
	1,245 total

(b) Indicate the source of the information provided in II.(a).

Results of the Annual Survey on Homeless Children and Youth

III.(a) List in order of numbers of homeless children, those municipalities having the greatest numbers of homeless children and youth.

Name of Municipality	Numbers of Children/Youth
Denver	583
Boulder	110
Alamosa	82
Fort Collins	72
Colorado Springs	70
Pueblo	45
Durango	36 (Others: 247)

(b) Indicate the source of the information provided in III.(a).

Results of Annual Survey on Homeless Children and Youth

IV. The sum of (a) and (b) should equal the total number reported in item I.(a).

(a) How many homeless children and youth are presently attending school in your State? 688

(b) How many homeless children and youth are not attending school in your State? 557

(c) Indicate the source of information provided in IV(a) and (b).

Results of the Annual Survey on Homeless Children and Youth

V. Indicate the reasons the homeless children and youth are not attending school in your State, and provide the basis for these conclusions.

See appendix I

(Use additional sheets, if necessary)

VI. (a) List, in order of importance, the special educational needs of the homeless children and youth.

See appendix

(b) List, in order of importance, the difficulties you have encountered in identifying these needs.

See appendix

"To the best of my knowledge, the facts and figures in this document are accurate."

William T Randall

Chief State School Officer

Dec. 19, 1989

Date

APPENDICES

Appendix A

The total figure of 1,245 homeless children and youth (corresponding to Roman numeral I) provided in response to Status Report question one was derived from data obtained through the Colorado Department of Education's annual survey of homeless children and youth. The survey was distributed to two hundred and seven homeless service providers throughout the state, and a response rate of eighty-eight per cent was achieved by the Department with respect to homeless service providers surveyed. The annual survey was also distributed to one hundred and seventeen medical facilities in a pilot project of sorts, and the response rate for the hospital survey was fifty-four per cent. The composite response rate for all entities surveyed on October 17th was seventy-six per cent.

This total figure of 1,245 represents the number of homeless children and youth that are homeless on any given day of the year in Colorado, since it is the product of a closely controlled one day count of homeless children throughout the state. It does not reflect a yearly average of homeless children and youth found in Colorado.

Appendix B

While the Department of Education was able to locate one hundred and eighty-nine high school-age homeless youth in its Annual Survey of homeless children and youth, the actual number of homeless youth in this high school-age bracket is most likely significantly higher. The reason for this discrepancy is the relative lack of accessibility of data on this sector of the homeless population compared to other grade levels on the part of the surveyors. Past studies of Colorado's homeless have shown that high school-age homeless youth typically avoid contact with homeless shelters and other homeless service providers that homeless families frequent and which are the sources for most homeless surveys. Such surveys will unavoidably overlook youth who are homeless but still attending high school while living independently, at least temporarily, and homeless youth who are not attending high school.

In an attempt to determine the size of this sector of the homeless population, the Colorado Department of Education surveyed the locations where such youth are typically found and consulted youth service professionals to come up with a yearly total of 1,103 homeless children and youth (see roman numeral II) in the high school-age group who are not residing in shelters and may or may not be attending high school. This figure does not reflect a yearly average for homeless children of all ages, because again it reflects the number of nomeless youth in the age bracket of fourteen to twenty-one. Please see Appendix H for a more in-depth analysis of this sector of the homeless population.

Appendix C

The Colorado Department of Education was able to locate thirty-eight homeless children and youth temporarily living with friends or relatives. The method for obtaining this seemingly inaccessible data was to include a question regarding this sector of the homeless population on the annual survey distributed to homeless service providers. The exact wording of the survey question was as follows: "Please list the number of school-age children who belong to individuals presently being served by the shelter but who are living temporarily with friends or relatives who have not adopted the child and who do not have legal guardianship over the child." The grade levels of these children were also requested, thus allowing us to include these figures in the total count provided in Status Report question one.

Appendix D

V. Indicate the reasons the homeless children and youth are not attending school in your state, and provide the basis for these conclusions.

Homeless children and youth who were located through Colorado's Annual Survey are not attending school for the following reasons:

1) Many are runaways, and consequently they face a significant number of administrative obstacles to enrolling in school such as the need for parental consent, identification, proof of immunizations, etc.

2) Lack of transportation was an often cited reason for non attendance by Colorado's homeless service providers. Many homeless parents do not own a vehicle in which to transport their children to and from school, or the cost of public transportation is too high for either the parents or the shelters to meet.

3) It is often the case that discontinuity in curriculum and eventual lack of academic success contributes to the low attendance rate among homeless children in Colorado. The mobility of the typical homeless family is the cause of such discontinuity in curriculum.

4) Tuition and other fees and residency requirements are an obstacle to an education for many homeless children and youth in the state. Although a public education is free, there are many fees involved which are beyond the means of the homeless parents.

5) Many of the homeless youth who are high school-age are not attending school because of their need to work.

6) Parents' lack of information also seems to be a contributing factor in low attendance rates among homeless children, stemming in part from their having newly arrived in a community.

7) Lack of child care for homeless residing in shelters often results in the need for many homeless youth to babysit younger siblings while either or both parents are working during the day.

Appendix D

(Question V. continued)

8) Homeless children and youth who reside at shelters for battered women are often educated within the facilities themselves rather than in community schools when the child's personal safety is at stake.

SOURCE: The results of the Colorado Department of Education's Annual Survey on Homeless Children and Youth.

Additional reasons for low school attendance levels among the homeless are as follows:

1) Compulsory attendance laws in Colorado do not generate a mechanism to verify data on homeless children and youth. Furthermore, laws do not encourage schools to look for the homeless.

2) Compulsory attendance laws in Colorado do not extend beyond the age of 16, therefore homeless youth above the age of 16 are not required by law to attend school.

Appendix E

VI(a). List, in order of importance, the special educational needs of the homeless children and youth.

Both the special educational needs of Colorado's homeless children and youth and those basic needs which are preconditions to education are listed below in order of importance.

1) Clothing - Clothing was by far the most frequently indicated need of homeless children and youth throughout the state of Colorado, as six hundred and nine children and youth were determined to be in need of clothing by respondents to the Annual Survey.

2) Special Counseling - The results of Colorado's Annual Survey on homeless children and youth indicated that five hundred and sixty-four children and youth were in need of special\emotional counseling, especially those children residing temporarily in safehouses or shelters for battered women, and runaway shelters.

3) School Meals - Three hundred and ninety-four children and youth were determined to be in need of school meals.

4) After School Facilities\Tutoring - The homeless service providers responding to the Colorado Annual Survey indicated that three hundred and eighty-four children and youth are in need of after school tutoring and after school facilities for studying purposes.

5) Health and Medical - Three hundred and ten children and youth were experiencing health or medical needs at the time of the Annual Survey.

6) Transportation - Two hundred and sixty-seven children and youth experience difficulty in obtaining some mode of transportation to and from school on a regular basis.

7) Immunizations - Homeless service providers reported that one hundred and fifty-four children and youth are in need of some kind of immunization.

8) English as a Second Language - According to homeless service providers throughout the state, thirty-eight children and youth are in need of training in English as a second language.

9) Special Education for the Handicapped - Only nine children and youth are in need of special education for the handicapped.

10) Other - Fewer numbers of children than those listed above are in need of special training for the hearing impaired, meals apart from school meals, and basic language training.

SOURCE: CDE's Annual Survey on Homeless Children and Youth

Additional Educational Needs

The educational needs of homeless children and youth as identified in a May, 1989, study conducted by the Colorado Department of Education entitled, "Assessing the Needs to Educate Homeless Children and Youth," are as follows:

1) One-on-one tutoring

2) Basic language and communications skills development

3) Extra-curricular activities to maximize social interaction

4) Stress management and life-coping counseling

5) Alternative educational settings for youth ages 16-21

6) Donated books and reading materials

Appendix F

VI (b). List, in order of importance, the difficulties you have encountered in identifying these needs.

1) The Colorado Department of Education's Annual Survey on homeless children and youth was conducted through homeless shelters and other homeless service providers throughout the state and not the schools, and as a result in some instances the individuals responding to the survey were not aware of the educational needs of the children.

2) Many shelters do not maintain on a regular basis the type of data and detailed information that is necessary for an in depth analysis of homeless children and youth. Furthermore, there is a lack of consistent standards among those shelters that do collect such data.

3) Many shelters surveyed indicated that the needs of the children were "fulfilled" at the time of the survey, while actually the very fact that these services were being provided to the children and youth at that time would logically indicate that there was indeed a need for such services.

4) Compulsory attendance laws in Colorado do not generate a mechanism to verify data on homeless children and youth. In addition, Colorado schools do not charge the schools with seeding out and recruiting homeless children and youth.

5) It is difficult to identify the educational needs of the runaway high school-age homeless population due to lack of accessibility to information on this particular sector of the homeless.

Appendix G

The Colorado Department of Education has instituted a program to monitor local educational agencies' compliance with the requirements of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act. The program of on-site review is carried out through the Department's Field Services Unit on a three year cycle. On-site review teams will visit every school district in the state over a period of three years.

Since the institution of the homeless dimension of the on-site review, the homeless education policies of exactly twenty-two school districts have been reviewed. Of the twenty-two school districts surveyed, all twenty-two indicated that homeless children and youth in their district had access to a free, public education. Twenty-one school districts reported that they did not have a residency requirement that hindered homeless children from attending school in their district, and only one district surveyed indicated that homeless children were enrolled in their school. The Denver school district was the sole reporter of homeless children in attendance, and the number of homeless children attending school in Denver was seventy-five at the time of the review.

APPENDIX H

REPORT ON HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH EDUCATION

Policy Options, Future Research, and Solutions

PREPARED BY BILL SCHROER

OCTOBER 24, 1989

I. Introduction

The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) contracted with me in October 1989, to estimate the number of homeless children and youth in Colorado not attending school or residing in a shelter. This exercise complemented a one-day count of homeless children and youth housed in a shelter, using some type of community assistance, or identified by local authorities. These young persons were classified as attending or not attending school. These tasks are required by the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act. An initial, conservative estimate of the number of homeless children and youth not attending school and not using a shelter in Colorado was set at 1103 persons. This estimate represents the best initial pool to define a specific homeless children and youth at-risk population, who at least during some point over the coarse of a year, are not attending school and are not using a shelter. This estimate did exist in 1989 and represents the best available, and most recent, documented statistics in Colorado defining this homeless children and youth at-risk population.

A comment is necessary on the methods considered to fulfill my assignment. It became very clear after a few interviews with youth service representatives that counting homeless children and youth who are not in school and not using a shelter is very difficult if not impossible. These are persons who do not want to be counted. Many of them are very suspicious, if not hostile, to strangers who wish to speak to them, even briefly. Even the established youth service agencies and programs find it difficult to outreach these young persons. Any person who attempts to count this population is taking some risks in personal safety. The homeless and youth service providers I initially contacted recommended a more effective method be chosen to estimate the number of homeless children and youth not attending school and not using a shelter.

A better method to complete this assignment was found. A search was made to identify a scientifically valid at-risk population estimate of homeless children and youth not attending school and not using a shelter. This was accomplished. Secondly, I cooperated with various shelter and youth service programs to interview homeless children and youth at their facilities. This more controlled setting was safer and more productive. These interviews proved invaluable for guidance in finding the estimated at-risk population estimate. This input also was indispensible in formulating policy options and in suggesting educational solutions for homeless children and youth. It appears even if state educational agencies have the time and financial resources to perform a census of homeless children and youth not in school and not using a shelter, it still may be impossible to do this. Risks of personal safety to census personnel, xenophobia, and the mercurial

qualities of homeless children and youth may make this census impossible.

II. Reasoning Behind This Estimation

It is impossible in two weeks to develop and execute a method to count the number of homeless children and youth not attending school and not using a homeless shelter or child/youth assistance facility. However, what reasonably can be accomplished is the production of an estimated homeless children and youth population at-risk of not attending school. These homeless young persons not attending school may or may not be using a shelter. There is a high probability that each person that comprises this at-risk population is homeless without shelter during at least part of his or her homelessness episode. The source for this estimated at-risk population is the Colorado Bureau of Investigation's (CBI) annual report of unresolved cases of missing children in Colorado.

According to the CBI, the vast majority of missing children and youth are runaway. Policy options directed at this at-risk population should be focused on the needs and conditions of runaways. A small percentage of these missing persons are abducted, kidnapped, or disappear for suspicious reasons. However, it can be assumed that young persons forcibly taken from home are homeless and should be included in the population at-risk. Police intervention or other legal solutions are needed before school re-entry programs and policies are considered for these young persons.

Colorado is fortunate to have the CBI statistics. During July 1986, the CBI's Missing Children Project was selected by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children to participate as one of seven state-level clearinghouses for dissemination of missing children information and is currently one of a network of thirty-eight state-level clearinghouses for missing and exploited children. The CBI count of unresolved cases of missing children is considered the best initial pool to define a specific homeless children and youth at-risk population since by definition virtually all of these children and youth are homeless and not attending school. Some of these missing or runaway children and youth may be able to earn an independent living and escape detection by formal authorities, some die without public knowledge, others move away, but most are on the streets somewhere, or in some type of shelter and not in the school system. If young persons runaway to another state, Colorado officials are still responsible to work with proper authorities to retrieve them. Virtually all of the state's missing or runaway children and youth become homeless in Colorado and those that get a job or die are the exception. In addition, the CBI at-risk population estimate does not total the large number of unreported runaway cases. So, for the very few of the 1103 unresolved cases of missing or runaway children or

youth who might not end up homeless, there are many more cases that are not even recorded or reported. That is why the CBI at-risk population estimate is considered conservative.

Other possible at-risk populations are a statewide public school dropout total and the number of young persons in the state social service child welfare and custody system. These at-risk populations are not as valid an estimate for the number of homeless children and youth not attending school. For example, many dropouts are not homeless and many young persons in the state social service system not only have a stable living environment but attend school. However, in addition to the missing or runaway children and youth identified by the CBI, the school dropout and child welfare and custody populations still represent at-risk individuals. School and social service system cooperation is required to investigate the fate of children and youth in their systems who may become homeless. Especially at-risk of running away, becoming homeless, and dropping out of school are the 4,203 young persons in the Colorado social service system who are in foster care or in some other type of out-of-home care. There is a reportedly high incidence of runways from these facilities.

III. A Suggested Method to Count More Accurately the Number of Homeless Children and Youth

The following tasks should be completed to more precisely estimate the number of homeless children and youth in Colorado, especially those young persons who are not attending school and are not sheltered.

- Estimation of the average length of homelessness for children and youth in Colorado.

- Intensive follow-up to the unresolved missing and runaway children and youth cases. An investigation of runaways from county department of social service alternative living, placement, and foster care facilities may give researchers a clearer picture of the ultimate fate of some runaway children and youth.

- Review of the missing or runaway children and youth reporting system to the Colorado Bureau of Investigation. The CBI indicates this system could be tightened to record more accurately the number of runaways and determine where they end up.

- Determine the number of unreported missing or runaway children and youth in Colorado.

- Include welfare hotels in the survey of shelters and schools to count the number of homeless children and youth.

- Determine the number of school drop-outs who secure jobs and independent living versus those who become homeless throughout Colorado.

Another at-risk population that requires consideration is gang youth. Some gang members are not part of the three at-risk populations identified above. In September 1989, the City and County of Denver reported 1,667 youths as gang members. However, efforts directed at gang youth not part of one of these other at-risk populations should be focused on preventive assistance to the entire gang member's family. Gang members who still lived at home, even if they are school dropouts, would not be part of a homeless person count.

It is strongly urged that the CDE, CBI, Colorado Department of Social Services, local school districts and law enforcement agencies, gang and youth assistance agencies, and others working with these at-risk populations coordinate activities to perform the tasks listed above. Since the CDE is responsible for an annual count of homeless children and youth and is funded for this exercise, it should take the lead in this joint effort. Additional help and assistance also may be available from the Graduate School of Public Affairs (GSPA) at the University of Colorado at Denver. This school is preparing to update and extend its highly successful method of counting homeless persons in Colorado. A weak area of the GSPA's initial estimate of the number of homeless persons was a good statewide estimate of homeless children and youth. I strongly suggest the CDE support an effort to coordinate with the GSPA and others to roll-in a count of homeless children and youth attending or not attending school and using or not using a shelter as part of the next comprehensive estimation of homeless persons in Colorado. The state agencies and non-profit assistance groups identified above also should be part of a comprehensive estimation process. These groups also may have their own resources or projects that can be directed at the research tasks listed above. For example, the Colorado Network of Runaway and Homeless Youth Services is in the middle of their own count of the number of homeless youth in Colorado, with final results expected in 1990. Finally, in addition to an estimation of homeless children and youth, research projects must include investigation of effects of homelessness on young persons as well as causes of and solutions for this phenomenon. Consideration of new methods to enhance educational opportunities for at-risk young persons also must be included in these research projects.

IV. Solutions to Homeless Children and Youth Not Attending School

Even though a survey counting each homeless child and youth not attending school and not using shelters was not performed, numerous meetings and interviews with homeless service providers and homeless children and youth were completed. This direct input kept me on target with my recommendations and conclusions. A two-page

questionnaire was developed to assist with this direct input and is attached to this report.

The predominate recommendation to solve the problem of educating homeless children and youth is for the public school system to do its part in **PREVENTING** homelessness by helping to eliminate runaways and dropouts and by reducing the number of students alienated with the public school system. This system must take greater responsibility to identify at-risk young persons and work with available community resources to prevent losing a child or youth from mainstream development. Reasons why homeless youth are not attending school are listed below.

REASONS WHY YOUTH ARE NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL

• poverty--It takes money to go to school, even public school. If a youth is concerned about living expenses as well as school supplies and materials, an economic burden develops to attend school.

• administration--If a youth is a runaway and homeless and wants to re-enter the school system, they must officially register. This triggers intervention by police or social service authorities, which the youth fears. This fear stems from the prospect of going back to the abusive or unhealthy family situation. While the intervention by public authorities is legally proper since a crime or life-threatening situation may be involved, *a protective intervention process to protect the youth from abusive parents or guardians and to expedite the administrative re-entry into the school system is sorely needed.* Many youth give up on the public school system simply because of the administrative delays of enrollment, which can take weeks. During this delay, they are pulled away from the school environment by other pressing needs, especially those youth who are emancipated and may not have responsibilities with public authorities.

• lack of sensitivity and responsibility to students in abusive situations--If a youth needs to escape an abusive home life, they can be **prevented** from running away and dropping out of school if the school system can immediately offer counseling, social, medical, and economic assistance. Many of these <u>at-risk</u> students believe the public school system is incapable of addressing their critical personal needs and hence runaway, dropout of school, and become homeless. This same perceived lack of sensitivity and service also inhibits many runaway, homeless youth from re-entering school. A specialized runaway/homeless youth education and service program may be part of an upgraded sensitivity and responsibility by the public school system to these at-risk individuals. Many students stay away from school simply because they have fallen behind a grade or two and they become stigmatized as losers by their new and younger student peer group. Perhaps a program to accelerate make-up work through tutors

or group learning sessions, or even simple extra-attention by teachers, can encourage more re-entry into school by homeless students.

• limited educational options--Interviews with homeless youth clarified the need to expand educational alternatives for homeless youth. Many of these youth mentioned the need for more vocational, job, and practical skills training. In addition, an expansion of the current alternative education program of the Denver Public Schools is required. More homeless youth would attend the "Re-Directions" program in Denver, but space in this program is limited. As mentioned above, more tutoring, hands-on, one-on-one, and individual counseling services should be available to homeless youth in the public school system. These services might be part of a special homeless education program that could include easier access to G.E.D education.

Many of the reasons homeless children and youth are not attending school can be traced back to public school system unresponsiveness or inability to deal with at-risk or homeless students. Some solutions require substantial investments of public dollars. For example, an expanded vocational training program in the public schools, or increased enrollment at various "alternative" education programs like the Denver Public Schools' "Re-Directions" program, require more public funding. Some solutions, however, appear to require little, if any, new funds. For instance, simple knowledge of available youth service and crisis intervention programs, as well as other community resources, can enable school administrators and teachers to deal more effectively with student emergencies. Well-timed intervention and use of existing resources can prevent a child or youth from dropping out, running away, or becoming homeless. It is strongly recommended each school district with homeless young persons receive empowerment training from local children and youth service providers and other representatives of community assistance. This training can be the first part a comprehensive review and implementation of low-cost, no-cost activities by school districts to prevent and assist homeless and runaway students. This training can enable the schools to solve more problems with at-risk students at little cost to the school and it also can help establish a service network with other community resources in emergency situations or when the child or youth becomes a runaway and homeless. In situations where homeless children and youth migrate to another school district's area, the young person's school district of origin is responsible to continue the education of the student. School districts should consider forming an outreach/advocacy/service network with local youth service providers and other community resources to enhance problem solving capabilities and to track better runaway homeless children and youth.

Public school systems can do a better job of helping to prevent homelessness and runaway situations. However, the fundamental

causes of homelessness involve family and home life difficulties, macroeconomic conditions, and other factors well beyond the responsibility and control of the public school system. Comprehensive solutions to homelessness and education of homeless children and youth must start with increasing the supply of stable, temporary and permanent housing and living alternatives for homeless families and youths. Education can not start until the homeless family or youth is stabilized and some shelter security is reached. Public school systems should focus on the low-cost, no-cost programs they can implement immediately to assist at-risk young persons and then evaluate carefully new investments of time and money directed at homelessness and runaway situations. These investments can work in concert with other social investments and opportunities such as increased affordable housing, jobs, and better intervention in child abuse situations to reduce the number of homeless. In particular, it is strongly recommended more public and private resources be directed at programs and services that eliminate and prevent homelessness for children and youth in order to stem the already burgeoning adult homeless population.

APPENDIX I

ANNUAL SURVEY ON EDUCATION OF HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Person completing form: _____
Title: _____

Agency or Shelter: _____
Type of shelter:(circle) public private
Street Address: _____
City, State, Zip Code: _____
Telephone: ( ) _____

For computational purposes, please include the total number of homeless children and youth receiving services from your shelter or agency on OCTOBER 17, 1989 only.

* * * * * * *

I. NUMBER OF CHILDREN AND ADULTS CLASSIFIED AS HOMELESS:

Grade Level	Total	Number attending school	Name of school(s)
Preschool (0-4 yrs)	_____	_____	_____
Elementary (K-6)	_____	_____	_____
Middle/Jr.High (7-9)	_____	_____	_____
High School (10-12)	_____	_____	_____

IF POSSIBLE, PLEASE PROVIDE NAMES OF CHILDREN ATTENDING SCHOOL:

_____ _____
_____ _____
_____ _____
_____ _____
_____ _____
_____ _____
_____ _____

II. CHILDREN LIVING APART FROM PARENT(S)

Please list the number of school age children who belong to individuals presently being served by your shelter but who are living temporarily with friends or relatives who have not adopted the child and do not have legal guardianship over the child: (If the children are not attending school, indicate "N/A")

Name	Grade Level	Name of School

III. PRIORITY NEEDS AND PROBLEMS OF SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

Please indicate below the number of children in need of special attention as follows:

English as a second language ____
Educational programs for the handicapped ____
Clothing ____
School meals programs ____
Transportation to school ____
Health and medical ____
Immunizations ____
After school facilities/tutoring ____
Special counseling ____
Other_____ ____

IV. SCHOOL AGE HOMELESS CHILDREN NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL

Please indicate below the numbers of school age children and youth who are NOT attending school for the following reasons:

Lack of transportation ____

Babysitting younger siblings ____

Tuition/Fees due to lack of residency ____

Parent's lack of information ____

Need to work ____

Discontinuity in children's curriculum leading to lack of school success and eventual attendance problems ____

APPENDIX A

HOSPITAL SURVEY OF HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Person completing form: _____
Title: _____

Name of hospital: _____
Street address: _____
City, state, Zip code: _____
Telephone: _____

For computational purposes, please include the total number of homeless children and youth treated by your facility on OCTOBER 12, 1989 only.

I. NUMBER OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH CLASSIFIED AS HOMELESS:

	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
Grade Level	Total	# Abandoned	# homeless prior to hospitalization	# served in indigent clinics
Preschool (0-4 yrs.)	_____	_____	_____	_____
Elementary (5-11 yrs.)	_____	_____	_____	_____
Middle/Jr. High (11-13 yrs.)	_____	_____	_____	_____
High School (14-21 yrs.)	_____	_____	_____	_____

II. PLEASE PROVIDE THE NUMBER OF HOMELESS CHILDREN RECEIVING EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE _____

III. PLEASE PROVIDE NAMES OF HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH BELOW:

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

PLEASE RETURN BY OCTOBER 16, 1989

APPENDIX D

Denver Public Schools

Report to
Board of Education

PILOT PROJECT
EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH FOR HOMELESS DENVER STUDENTS

October, 1989

Denver Public Schools
AGENDA SUMMARY SHEET

Item # _____

Meeting Date: 10/05/89

Action Taken:
Approved: _____
Disapproved: _____
Postponed: ____ Date: _____

Subject: Educational Outreach for Homeless Denver Students

Priority: High X Low ___ Why? To assist current DPS students who are homeless

Statement of Issue: The Colorado Department of Education estimates that during the last school year 1,000 school-aged children in Denver experienced homelessness with their families. Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Mayer, through their JFM Foundation, came forward last summer to offer personal and financial resources to assist in providing high support to these children and their families so their educations will be successful.

Options/Alternatives Considered, Rationale, Implications: Through the summer, in collaboration with the Mayers, CDE, City and County agencies, the Colorado Coalition for the Homeless, the Junior League, DCTA, and DPS, a variety of ideas were discussed and debated, including the establishment of transitional classrooms in or near various shelters. This proposal to provide support through the schools represents a true coming together which the various parties involved all support.

Recommendation: It is recommended that this proposal be approved by the Board at its October legislative meeting, with the understanding that implementation will occur incrementally as funding is secured.

By Whom? Departments of Community Affairs and Elementary Education

Implications of Acceptance/Rejection: The JFM Foundation will commit up to $50,000 per year for a 3-year period; funding from other sources is being sought now to reach the needed funding level. DPS will not experience direct costs during the pilot period. The program is being planned jointly with CDE and the DPS Federal Programs Office so that, if successful, it can be continued and expanded in the future with new levels of federal funding.

Budget: $128,537 - private funding sources

Personnel: Paid DPS staff will include a teacher/community liaison and a part-time paraprofessional for each of the two school communities. Other personnel will serve in voluntary capacities.

Planning Completion Date: October 25, 1989
Implementation Date: November 15, 1989

Evaluation Date(s): Monitoring and data collection will be ongoing, especially during the first-year development period; annual evaluations will be done, as well as a three-year summary evaluation.

By Whom: Evaluation will be conducted by Colorado Department of Education and DPS Program Evaluation Department.

This document reviewed by: Dean F. Damon, Community Affairs
James H. Daniels, Elementary Education

Comments:

Introduction

Approximately 200 children from east side shelters that are adjacent to the Steele/Crofton attendance area enter these schools throughout the year. On the west side, Colfax School is adjacent to a shelter for battered women and also receives a significant number of students from the shelter.

A major problem facing these students is the instability of their environment. The parents need to be working or looking for employment and adequate housing. Their problems are intensified by the shelters' regulations which do not permit the families to enter the facilities until late in the afternoon. There is a demonstrated need for after-school care for these children and, in some cases, before-school care. In addition, the need exists for greater access to school personnel by parents, especially after traditional school hours. Another need is for stable and continuous school enrollment for these students until more permanent housing is secured for their families.

Proposal

To accommodate the special needs of homeless children and their families, the Denver Public Schools is proposing that community study halls which will operate on a daily basis be established in the schools mentioned. In the Steele/Crofton attendance area, the study hall will be located at Crofton School; Steele children will have access to this program after they return to the Crofton area each afternoon from Steele. A similar study hall will be established at Colfax.

In addition to the study hall, the District will recommend to the parents that the children continue their schooling at these locations as long as the family stays in the same quadrant as the shelter. This practice will help to ensure continuity and stability for the children's education. Preliminary estimates of the need for this service in these schools is in the range of 15-25% because of the high mobility of the population to be served.

The Denver Public Schools will staff each program with a certified teacher who will also serve as a liaison to the parents, the shelters, and other service agencies.The teacher will be responsible for linking with other community-based and city agencies and serve as a resource to the school and the family in addressing the children's educational needs. The teacher will also work with Emily Griffith Opportunity school and the Community College of Denver to assist the parents,when appropriate, with adult education, job training, and placement. Paraprofessionals will also be assigned to work in the study halls to ensure that the children have continuity and familiarity with an adult in the after-school program. Volunteers and city recreation staff will be recruited to extend additional adult support to the children, but the need of the children for stability necessitates at least one paid staff member at each after-school site on an ongoing basis.

The study halls, which will operate at least five days a week, will be modeled after similar community study halls that operate throughout the District. The teacher assigned to this project will work closely with the Office of Volunteer Service and the school principals to provide ancillary support for the children. The study halls will be a combination of academic and recreational activities, and will be open to all children enrolled in the two school communities. By opening the study halls to all children, the program will avoid the isolation of these children and possible stigma associated with being labeled a homeless child.

As the families become settled in more permanent housing, the children will then transfer appropriately to the school serving their new area of residence. The teacher/liaison will then work with parents and the sending and receiving schools to ensure a smooth and successful transitions for the children from one school to another.

Budget

Personnel	
2 Teacher Liaison Positions @$31,000	$62,000
2 Paraprofessional Positions @$ 7,500	15,000
Fringe Benefits	14,537
Materials & Supplies (Includes school supplies & snacks)	10,000
Bus Transportation	10,000
Child Care Tuition	15,000
Mileage	2,000
TOTAL	$128,537

APPENDIX K

EDUCATION OF HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH UNDER THE STEWART B. MCKINNEY HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT

Name of school district: _____

Name of interviewee: _____ Date: _____

DEFINITIONS:

"Homeless"- A homeless individual is one who (1) lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate residence, or (2) has primary nighttime residence in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter for temporary accommodations (including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill), an institution providing temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized, or a public or private place not designated for, or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

"Child" or "Youth" - Persons who, if they were children of residents of the state, would be entitled to a free public education.

QUESTIONS:

1. Do homeless children/youth have access to a free and appropriate public education which would be provided to the children of a resident in your district? ____yes ____no

2. Do you have a residency requirement in your district that would prohibit homeless children from attending your school? ____yes ____no

3. List the number of homeless children and youth attending school in your district. _____

4. Please identify the source of the information provided in question 3. _____

_____

_____

signature of CDE consultant